

Sangria Crumble

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Sangria Crumble

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This crumble is awesome served with saffron custard or your favourite vanilla ice cream.

SERVES 4 TO 6

When we first introduced this dish to the menu, we were going to use plums but they were about to go out of season. Pears were the seasonal solution. Really, when making this, use any fruit that's in right now and affordable: plums, quinces, pears, apples, anything that's your favourite. It's awesome served with saffron custard or your favourite vanilla ice cream.

Filling

- 375 ml (1 ½ cups) red wine, any variety
- 125 ml (½ cup) Pedro Ximenez sherry (or brandy works, too)
- 5 cloves
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 4 black peppercorns
- 1 fresh bay leaf
- 2 star anise
- Peel of ½ orange, white pith removed, cut into strips
- Peel of ½ lemon, white pith removed, cut into strips

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- 115 g (½ cup) brown sugar
- 1.5 kg of pears

Crumble

- 100 g (1 cup) ground almonds
- 225 g (1 ½ cups) plain (all-purpose) flour
- 2 tsp baking powder

Pinch of salt

- 115 g (½ cup) caster (superfine) sugar
- 115 g (½ cup) brown sugar
- 1 tsp finely chopped rosemary leaves
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- Zest of ½ orange
- 185 g cold plant-based butter
- 45 g (½ cup) flaked almonds

Saffron custard

- 500 ml (2 cups) soy milk
- 2 strips orange peel, white pith removed
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste or extract
- Pinch of saffron threads
- 2 whole cloves
- 55 g (¼ cup) caster (superfine) sugar
- 3 tsp cornflour (cornstarch)
- mixed with 60 ml (¼ cup) soy milk

Preheat the oven to 170°C.

Place 125 ml (½ cup) water and all of the filling ingredients except the pears in a medium-sized saucepan and bring to the boil. Stir until the sugar is dissolved, then remove from the heat and allow to sit for at least 15 minutes for all the flavours to infuse.

To prepare the pears, cut off both ends and peel. Cut into quarters, then remove the core by cutting around the seeds.

Place the cut pears in an ovenproof dish that is large enough to fit the pears in a single layer (it's fine if a few are resting on top of each other). Pour over the infused wine and cover the pears with some baking paper, pressing the paper down onto the surface. This will be easier to do if you cut the paper roughly the same size as the opening of the dish (if you wanna get fancy, the cheffy word for this is a *cartouche*).

Poach the pears in the oven for approximately 45 minutes or until a knife slips through the flesh without too much resistance. You don't want mush though (unless mush is your thing).

Once the pears are cooked, remove from the poaching liquid and set aside in a bowl. Pour the poaching liquid into a saucepan and simmer over medium heat until the liquid has reduced by half and is beginning to look a little syrupy.

Remove from the heat and set aside.

To make the crumble, combine all of the ingredients except the butter and flaked almonds in a bowl and mix well. Add the butter to the bowl and rub it into the dry mixture using your fingertips, until it resembles rough breadcrumbs with chunky bits through it. Gently stir through the flaked almonds.

Place a layer of pears on the bottom of an ovenproof dish or individual ceramic moulds, then cover with the crumble mixture. I like a 50/50 fruit to crumble ratio because, let's face it, the crumble is the best part! Very lightly press down on the crumble mixture to make sure it's filled any gaps between the pears. Make sure not to press too firmly though as you still want it to be a bit rough and bumpy. Bake for 25 minutes or until the top is golden and the juices from the fruit are beginning to bubble up around the edges.

To make the saffron custard, place all of the ingredients except the cornflour mixture in a medium-sized saucepan and bring to the boil. Remove from the heat and set aside to infuse for 15 minutes.

Remove the cinnamon stick, peel and cloves then return to a low heat.

Pour the cornflour mixture into the infused soy milk and whisk until it begins to thicken, about 2 minutes.

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